902 KAR 20:300. Operation and services; nursing facilities.

Section 9. Nursing Services [nursing facilities]. The facility shall have sufficient nursing staff to provide nursing and related services to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of each resident, as determined by resident assessments and individual plans of care.

(1) Sufficient staff.

(a) The facility shall provide services by sufficient numbers of each of the following types of personnel on a twenty-four (24) hour basis to provide nursing care to all residents in accordance with resident care plans:

1. Except when waived under subsection (3) of this section, licensed nurses; and

2. Other nursing personnel.

(b) Except when waived under subsection (3) of this section, the facility shall designate a licensed nurse to serve as a charge nurse on each tour of duty.

(2) Registered nurse.

(a) Except when waived under subsection (3) or (4) of this section, the facility shall use the services of a registered nurse for at least eight (8) consecutive hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

(b) Except when waived under subsection (3) or (4) of this section, the facility must designate a registered nurse to serve as the director of nursing on a full-time basis.

(c) The director of nursing may serve as a charge nurse only when the facility has an average daily occupancy of sixty (60) or fewer residents.

(3) Licensed nurse waiver. Waiver of requirement to provide licensed nurses on a twenty-four (24) hour basis. A facility may request a waiver from the requirement that a nursing facility provide a registered nurse for at least eight (8) consecutive hours a day, seven (7) days a week, as specified in subsection (2) of this section, and the requirement that a nursing facility provide licensed nurses on a twenty-four (24) hour basis, including a charge nurse as specified in subsection (1) of this section, if the following conditions are met:

(a) The facility demonstrates to the satisfaction of the cabinet that the facility has been unable, despite diligent efforts (including offering wages at the community prevailing rate for nursing facilities), to recruit appropriate personnel;
(b) The cabinet determines that a waiver of the requirement will not endanger the health or safety of individuals staying in the facility;

(c) A waiver granted under the conditions listed in this subsection is subject to revocation if the cabinet finds that the health and safety of the residents is threatened.

(d) In granting or renewing a waiver, a facility may be required by the cabinet to use other qualified, licensed personnel.

(e) The facility shall have an on-call system which provides for an immediate response by a registered nurse or a physician for those times when licensed nursing services are not available.

(4) Registered nurse waiver. Waiver of the requirement to provide services of a registered nurse for more than forty (40) hours a week, including a director of nursing specified in subsection (2) of this section, may be granted if the cabinet finds that the facility:

(a) Is located in a rural area and the supply of skilled nursing facility services in the area is not sufficient to meet the needs of individuals residing in the area;

(b) Has one (1) full-time registered nurse who is regularly on duty at the facility forty (40) hours a week; and

(c) Either:

1. Has only patients whose physicians have indicated (through physicians' orders or admission notes) that they do not require the services of a registered nurse or a physician for a forty-eight (48) hour period; or

2. Has made arrangements for a registered nurse or a physician to spend time at the facility, as determined necessary by the physician, to provide necessary skilled nursing services on days when the regular full-time registered nurse is not on duty.

(d) A waiver of the registered nurse requirement under paragraph (a) of this subsection is subject to revocation if the cabinet finds that the health and safety of the residents is threatened.

(5) When a waiver is granted a facility shall inform the residents, their legal representatives, and members of their immediate family.